



*For Immediate Release*

## **HONDA CENTER TO BECOME OFFICIAL HOME OF BIG WEST BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT BEGINNING IN 2011 The Event Remains in Anaheim Which Has Played Host Since 2001**

**Anaheim, CA (November 17, 2009)** – Honda Center announced today a five-year partnership with the Big West Conference to host its annual men's and women's post-season basketball tournament beginning in 2011. Each year the winner of the three-day single-elimination playoff receives an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

"This is exciting news both for our venue and Southern California sports fans," said **Tim Ryan, President/CEO of Honda Center**. "The Big West Tournament is annually one of the marquee collegiate sporting events in the region and we're looking forward to helping push it to new heights."

The Big West and Honda Center have teamed up for "March Madness" and "The Road To The Final Four" on numerous occasions including men's basketball regionals in 1998, 2001 and 2003 and first and second round action in 2008. In addition, the Big West and Honda Center was selected as host of the 2011 NCAA Division I Men's Basketball West Regional.

"The Big West Conference is delighted to continue its long-term relationship with the city of Anaheim and keep its signature event in the center of the conference's geographic footprint," said **Big West Commissioner Dennis Farrell**. "The Big West and Honda Center have developed a strong relationship over the years, and this is a great opportunity for our student-athletes to play in a building that has hosted five NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship preliminary round events over the last decade."

Farrell added, "We appreciate the efforts that have been made by the Anaheim Convention Center Arena to provide a quality venue for our basketball tournament this past decade, allowing us to stage this event around an appealing destination for both our schools and fans, especially those from the Central Coast and Northern California."

The Big West Tournament is the oldest NCAA Division I post-season basketball tournament in the west, dating back to 1976 when the conference was known as the Pacific Coast Athletic Association. Over the years it has been staged in Stockton, CA (1976); Inglewood, CA (1983-88); Long Beach, CA (1989-93); Las Vegas, NV (1994-95); Reno, NV (1996-2000); and twice at the Anaheim Convention Center Arena (1977-82 and 2001-2010).

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“We have appreciated our long relationship with the Big West Basketball Tournament and are happy that the event will remain in Anaheim for the foreseeable future,” said **Tom Morton, Executive Director of Convention, Sports & Entertainment for the city of Anaheim**. “The Anaheim Arena will continue to partner with the Big West Conference and ESPN to host the 76 Basketball Classic, which includes both UCLA and Long Beach State this Thanksgiving Weekend. The move of the conference tournament to Honda Center will also allow the potential expansion of the annual Natural Products Expo West tradeshow into the Arena.”

Anaheim is one of the nation’s premier municipalities and is California’s 10th most populous city. In addition to successful sports franchises, including Angels Baseball and the NHL’s Ducks, Anaheim hosts more than 20 million visitors each year, making it the place the world calls home.

Ticket and specific date information for the 2011 Big West Tournament will be available this spring. For information regarding the 2010 Big West Tournament, please visit [bigwest.org](http://bigwest.org).

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**Contacts:**

Honda Center

Merit Tully, 714-704-2412, [mtully@hondacenter.com](mailto:mtully@hondacenter.com)

Tracy Richmond, 714-704-2988, [trichmond@hondacenter.com](mailto:trichmond@hondacenter.com)

Big West

Mike Villamor, (949) 261-2525, [mwillamor@bigwest.org](mailto:mwillamor@bigwest.org)